Surára
Pakidái

/23 cont./

411 individual archers. The aforementioned men then shot three arrows into the air successively (one with a large lancet-shaped point, one with a small lancet-shaped point, and one with a bone point), and each one hit the leaf, usually even the center of it. This Indian [114] ability to hit targets even with an indirect shot has already been pointed out by Friederici and substantiated in the sources (107).

107. Friederici, 1907, p. 329.

I also observed, however, that not all the men were equally good archers, although from childhood on, of course, they are constantly handling bow and arrow. My servant Mateus and I each carried a shotgun, 20 caliber, with us, and the use of our guns aroused the interest of only a few men. The aforementioned three Surára and the Pakidái, however, as well as several other warriors, after a very short time, knew how to handle them just as well as bow and arrow.

[114] Koch-Grünberg came to similar conclusions on his journeys, for he writes: "This is not to say that every Indian is an accomplished hunter. Among these people, too, talents and inclinations are unevenly distributed..." (108).

108. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 59.

[422] It should be mentioned further that bows and arrows repre-
[946] sent the most valuable private property of every man, and they
[956] also play a large part in all magical and religious practices (cures of the sick, festivals, dances, etc.). Furthermore, the weapons
[437] are favorite trade items and gifts of honor which the Surára and
[431] Pakidái occasionally receive from the Xiriána or give the latter during visits (see pp. 13, 159/160). A young man who wants to
[584] marry a girl must also first make a bow and five different arrows for his future father-in-law. /24/ If a warrior dies, his weapons
[764] are burned with him, so that he may use them on his journey to the moon and on the moon itself (see p.150).

411 Before the Surára and Pakidái adopted the large reverse flat
173 bow from the Xiriána, I was told, their forefathers were acquainted with only the branch-bow.

Surára
Pakidái

/40 cont./

304 small pieces of reed 1-2 centimeters long, from which hang, on
301 one or two short chains of beads, small triangular pieces of silver leaf, shiny silver coins, or particularly large glass beads. Women also have a special preference for these objects. The teeth of the cutia (Dasyprocta aguti L.) -- tomenáke --, which the men use as a knife (see p.115, are a typical feminine ear ornament.
[314] To prevent them from slipping out of the perforation, a small lump of tree resin is stuck on the back end. The perforations of the ear lobes are also adorned now and then with blossoms.

In the perforations of the lower lip and the corners of the mouth on either side the women now and again have delicate little reed rods -- tunhabaácre -- 15-17 and 12-15 centimeters
[184] long, respectively. Among the Xiriána women married to Surára and Pakidái men I observed that they wear, in addition, two little reed rods 30-35 centimeters long in the pierced nasal septum -- huxibéka -- (Ill. 16). This piercing I was told, is reserved for only the female members of this large, mighty tribe.
[184] This also explains why the perforations of the Pusheweteri and Aramamesteri women correspond perfectly to those of their Surára and Pakidái "sisters," that is to say, there is no piercing of the nasal septum. The same applies for Nikeromá, the little captive from the hostile tribe of the Karauateri.

301 All the ornamental objects named are made by the male
422 and female wearers themselves and are regarded as personal property.

304 Due to Koch-Grünberg's research among the Xiriána
301 (Schirianá), Waiká (Waíka), and various Karaiben /Carib/ tribes,
184 abundant comparative and supplementary material is available
[171] to me. Thus, the great investigator writes with regard to the
[127] Xiriána (Schirianá): "Nasal septum, /41/ ear lobes, and lower lip were pierced among the men and in many cases adorned with little reed rods almost as long as a hand. On special occasions they also wear a jaguar tooth in the lower lip.

"The women had long reed rods in the pierced ear-lobes, the lower lip, and the corners of the mouth. Three narrow strips of reed, spread out fan-shaped at both ends, adorned the nasal septum (Ill. 12)" (213).

213. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 306.

/201 cont./

342 The two windscreens had two posts stuck superficially into the ground at a distance of two meters apart. Contiguous to the post there was a smaller stake tied to it with a bejuco. The roof of this screen was covered with interlaced branches and roofed with platanillo leaves and supported with a slight inclination against two posts. The roof projects from the posts some [352] 40 centimeters and touches the ground at its lower edge. In these houses the Sanemá hang their hammocks of bejuco or majagua. In some ranchos we found vestiges of fire.

177 The houses of Makiritare type (rectangular or oblong) are 342 small-scale imitations and have only one room. The roofs, made of palm leaves, are of two rectangular slopes and are raised on four or six posts. The edges of the roof are straight or rounded. The walls consist of bark or juxtaposed sticks. They have an average dimension of four meters long by two meters wide and approximately three high. Each house has one or two 353 quite narrow doors. Within the house (of the Makiritare type) [179] the greatest disorder reigns: from the roof and from the walls hang baskets, gourds, weapons, leather bags, tobacco, palm fruit, hammocks /chinchorros/ of bejuco, majagua, and cotton. On the floor there are hearths, firewood, cooking utensils, guapas with spindle and cotton, yuca graters, dogs, and children, all in confusion without order or arrangement. It is clear that they are not used to living under a roof, and the house is a place for storing things rather than a habitation.

105 The technology of the Sanemá is very little-developed, and • 422 precisely for this reason one can classify the Sanemá (and 484 the Yanoama in general) as representatives of the most backward peoples of America and of the whole world. It would seem that the ideal of these seminomadic Indians is: omnia mea mecum porto -- everything that is mine I carry with me! and, apart from their weapons, a few implements, and a basket, it is unusual [352] for them to carry anything else on their travels. They do not even transport their hammocks /202/ of bejuco or majagua from one camp to another, but rather make new ones each time they need them.

6: Vinci T-5 (1950) 1959 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Sanema

the poison has time to spread and enter the bloodstream. The Samatari go off to war with masses of these poisoned arrows and a cane quiver slung across their shoulders. This contains spare arrow-heads which can be quickly attached to the arrows arriving in a stream from the enemy. Every fighter carries his own ammunition, but the weapons are really the common property of friend and foe alike.

There is one other widely used weapon, and a deadly one it is—a heavy wooden club for use on the cranium in close-combat conditions, such as usually arise at the end of the battle when the ammunition is exhausted and the antagonists have worked themselves up into a fine frenzy. Then the hand-to-hand fighting excels in ferocity, but the blood scattered on the ground is misleading—the actual mortality rate is very low. Tremendous whacks on the head are exchanged, that lay the scalp open right down to the bone. But cracking the cranium itself is not so easy: Samatari heads are harder than Coroso palm.

One may well ask why the Indians are forever fighting these wars, but this is to put the question a little too ingenuously. The answer can only be that it is their mode of life—just as it is other people's mode of life not to keep on fighting. There are vendettas as old as their race itself, fanned by their belief in the evil eye of the witch doctors who can cause the death of children and spread sickness through the tribe. Fear is the underlying cause, at the origin of these vendettas and at the origin of all origins; fear that is the very condition, the very breath of existence for primitive man in the inhuman, unhuman forest regions that set their stamp on all who live in them. Fear gives birth to these bloody encounters, which a little cool-headedness could transform into the meeting of friends. We ourselves owed our salvation to the fact that we hadn't fought back. We had a certain confidence too, over and above the passing moment of fear, a certain faith in the essential goodness of man.

But apart from fear and the vendettas which grow out of it, there is one native activity which just as easily leads to war: theft. Theft is the activity in which the Shirians excel, their way of living. Everything that can further their nomadic existence is torn out of the earth, the trees and the animals. The process means effort and struggle, always more or less exhausting and unsafe. It follows logically that if anything they basically need belongs to other men, they will take it from them, too. The tribe on the river so-and-so possesses a machete, or a knife—perhaps the result of long bargaining with their neighbours, or, more often, of a highly successful bit of burglary and some

/467/

Property and Ownership

423 Every man has property rights over the land which he has cleared for the planting of the "conuco," until he has abandoned it.

When a settlement returns to a former site, every man has the right to build his new dwelling in the same place where the previous one was, if he should so desire, even when the place might have been covered by the forest, as frequently occurs.

• 422 Every person possesses his own hammock and ornaments.

[423] The men are owners of the "conucos," the dwellings, the clay pots, hunting and fishing equipment, and that for making fire, and the machetes.

Women possess the baskets, the spinning equipment, the totumas for water, the bands for carrying children, the firewood, and the leaves of the roof.

Both the men and the women may possess axes, knives, mirrors, beads, or other objects which they might have made or acquired.

437 Objects change ownership either by gift or by barter. Bartered objects are generally those which cannot be made or obtained by everyone. These include foreign articles (e.g., machetes, matches, etc.) and also domestic articles which are made only by certain persons or products which everyone does not have the ability to make successfully (e.g., clay pots for cooking, the strongest type of "yopo," totumas for water, and shafts for arrows).

431 Articles to which each and every person has access, such as foodstuffs, water, baskets, and small totumas or gourds, are generally given away when they are divided up. Sometimes even

[572] scarce articles are given to intimate friends.

000(lapa, Spanish).

222 The collection of small fruits, spiders, ant grubs, wild honey, crabs, mushrooms and fish also contributes variety to the Yąnomamö diet.

241 Cultivated foods contribute the greater proportion
262 of calories to the Yąnomamö diet, probably upwards of 85%,
[146] although this figure would vary seasonally. Again, those
(177) Yąnomamö villages living close to Makiritare settlements cultivate much more yucca (manioc) than platanos, refining it in some cases to meal as do the Makiritares. Elsewhere
[252] the Yąnomamö eat their yucca roasted or boiled or make cassave bread by a technique quite distinct from that employed by the Makiritare.

722 Yąnomamö material culture is very much attenuated by
[422] comparison with, for example, Makiritare. The Yąnomamö like to limit their possessions to an amount that is readily transported by the women, because the entire village may be obliged at any given moment to abandon its site to avoid raiders, or may be invited to a feast at another village.
[427] They do not like to leave possessions in their village when
[574] they leave it, as visitors from other villages would take them. And, their warfare pattern precludes the possibility of leaving a few people behind to guard the village, as they
[341] would be easily overwhelmed by a raiding party. When just a portion of the village leaves to visit another group, those that stay behind move into the jungle some distance from the village and live in well-concealed huts until their co-

722 361 villagers return from their visit, returning only to fetch food from the garden. When the men are away on a raid, the women and children are concealed in these temporary sites 221 361 574 922 until the men return. During the dry season when raiding and feasting are common, villages are frequently deserted; the men are away on a raid and the women and children are hiding in the jungle, or the entire village has gone off to participate in a feast at another village. This pattern has rather unfortunately been described as nomadism, or semi-nomadism, by a number of students of Yąnomamö culture. I wish to emphasize that the Yąnomamö population movements, annually or over a longer period of time, are almost exclusively a function of their warfare pattern and not economic considerations, as is implied in the use of the terms nomadism and semi-nomadism.

422 484 All males above 13 or 14 years of age have a bow, [411] arrows, a bamboo case for carrying extra arrow tips, a fire [415] drill, and several 'knives' made from the incisors of the [372] [237] agouti rodent. Both sexes have either a cotton or a vine [352] hammock. These possessions are easily carried by the owner [123] on long trips and are rapidly packed. Whenever I wanted to accompany a group of people on trips to other villages they always complained about how much of a burden I would be. It always took me several hours to prepare my packs, and I always took more than I could comfortably carry myself, having 484 to hire some of them to assist me. They, on the contrary, could be ready to depart within ten minutes of their decision to leave, having only to roll up their hammocks and pack a few

484 plantains to eat en route. Most of the time they did not even carry their hammocks, as these could be easily manufactured from bark strips in a matter of minutes.

[462] [295] Women make several kinds of baskets, including ones to carry the family possessions when the group moves. When the entire village moves, progress is slow and only a few miles are covered each day. The reason for this is that [888] [958] [855] older people and those who are sick travel very slowly, children must be carried by their parents, and food in large quantities must be transported to provision the moving group. Thus, a trip that a group of young men could easily make in one day would require two or three days if the entire village moved that distance.

415 323 The only non-portable[1] (as well as the only durable) item made by the Yąnomamö is a large, heavy, poorly fired [84] [443] clay pot. These are manufactured by only a few villages, which serve as trading centers for this industry. They are [462] [422] [562] made by men and are their property since women are too clumsy to be permitted to handle and use them and would probably break them. When a pot does break, the fragments are used as mortars for grinding drugs, small stone celts, found in the woods by the Yąnomamö, serving as pestles. The larger fragments of a broken pot are used as cooking plates in the [179] manufacture of cassave bread. Despite the fact that most of the Yąnomamö villages have not been contacted directly, the

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[1] The pots are concealed in the garden when the group moves.

36 · ADAPTATION

244 [177] [252] [799] Many of the Yąnomamö villages have recently obtained bitter manioc, a poisonous variety that must be leached of its toxic ingredient before it can be eaten. This variety is grown in large quantities by the Carib-speaking Makiritare Indians-and by rural Venezuelans-and most of it has been introduced to the Yąnomamö recently by missionaries. Where the Yąnomamö are in direct contact with the Makiritare, they have, of course, adopted the crop without the intervention of the missionaries.

Next in importance are three other root crops: taro, sweet potatoes, and mapuey. [252] All of these resemble potatoes; they are usually boiled, but occasionally they are roasted directly over the coals.

245 [423] The Yąnomamö also cultivate a species of palm tree that produces a large crop of fruit each February and a much smaller crop in June. Each tree is owned by the individual who planted it, and his rights to the fruit continue even after the garden has been abandoned. It takes about six or seven years for a newly planted tree to produce its first crop, so the Yąnomamö are quite reluctant to move very far away from sites where they possess producing groves of these trees. When they do move, they return each year to collect the peach-palm fruit. They try, as well, to move to an abandoned garden that still has producing peach palms. If thieves have been raiding the unguarded crop, the Yąnomamö may cut the trees down, keeping the wood to make bows. They would sooner destroy an item of personal property than permit others to exploit it without permission.

243 [262] Maize is probably next in importance, but in a special sense. It appears to be cultivated as an emergency crop because its seeds are light and easily transported. A group that must move its garden a long distance can carry large quantities of maize seed and produce a substantial crop in a relatively short period of time. Maize does not, however, under normal circumstances, figure prominently in the daily diet of the Yąnomamö.

Cane for arrow manufacturing is also grown. The mature plant consists of a long, slender, pithy cane that has no joints or branches and is ideally suited for arrow shafts. The Yąnomamö use the cane just as they harvest it. Their arrows are over 6 feet long. Wing feathers from the larger species of wild turkey are used to fletch the arrow. On [237] each side of the shaft, one feather is tied with finely spun cotton fibers, being attached in such a way that the arrow will spin when it is released; its accuracy is thus improved in the way a bullet's accuracy is improved by rifling in a gun barrel. A nock is carved [322] from wood with an agouti-tooth knife; it looks very much like a golf-ball tee when finished, except that it is grooved at the large end where it will be fitted to the bowstring. [314] [284] The nock is inserted in the narrow end of the cane and held fast with pitch adhesive and a tight wrapping of fine cotton thread. The large end of the cane is not altered if it is to take a curare tip, since it tapers to a fine point and, therefore, blends into the thin curare point. If the point to be mounted is of the lanceolate type, the tip of the cane is cut off at its maximum diameter, wrapped with heavy cord, and the point jammed into the cane pith with considerable force. The fiber wrapping prevents the cane from splitting while the point is being mounted. The finished product is a very handsome [531] piece of work, and the Yąnomamö are proud of their arrows. They decorate the bamboo points by painting them red and adding black designs, and they attach a few colorful [422] [437] feathers to the fletched end. A seasoned arrow is a prized possession, in high demand in the trading network.